

THE SABBATH SCOOP

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What's Wrong with Christmas?

Is it really wrong to observe this day in honor of Christ's birth?

By Gregory Dullum

Why is Christmas *the major* holiday in today's world? Is it because people are so eager to *worship* the TRUE GOD? No, that can't be the reason. Most people today are NOT very religious. A lot don't go to church at all. Others go just twice a year—Christmas and Easter. So why do these people bother to keep what they have been told is a celebration of the birth of Christ? They do it because Christmas is a time of sensual PLEASURE—pretty lights, pretty decorations, parties, feasting, drunkenness and gift-getting.

The Apostle Paul said the last days would be like this: "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves... lovers of *pleasure* rather than lovers of God" (2 Tim. 3:1, 4, emphasis added).

Nominal Christians Keep It

There are religious people who really do think they're honoring Christ by keeping Christmas. These people go to church every Sunday and claim to be Christian but FAIL to DO *what the Bible says*. Paul included this group in his description of the last days: "having a form of godliness but denying its power" (v. 5).

Christ asked a question that should be posed to these nominal Christians: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).

He also said, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will de-



NAPSA photo

The Christmas tree is a custom that can be traced to the pagan Druids.

clare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness' (Mat. 7:21-23).

There may be professing Christians who will say, "Lord, Lord, Did we not keep Christmas every year to honor You?" And Christ will reply, "I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness."

In the verses we just read, Christ said it's imperative that we 1) DO *what He says*; 2) DO the *will of the Father*, and 3) DON'T *practice lawlessness*. How do these three things apply to Christmas observance? Did Jesus ever *tell us* to observe it? Is it *God's will* that we keep it? Is Christmas *lawlessness*?

No Command—Just Bad Examples

Nowhere in the Bible is there a command to keep Christmas. Christ never told his disciples to celebrate his birthday (or Christmas) and there is NO RECORD of the New Testament church *ever* observing it.

Although there is no biblical COMMAND to have birthday celebrations, neither is there a specific PROHIBITION against them. So if Christmas were truly Christ's birthday, would it be wrong to celebrate it?

Since there is no specific command one way or the other regarding birthdays, if we seek guidance from the Bible in this matter, we must look to what is recorded and draw a logical conclusion. What the Bible says about birthday observances is this: only pagans are recorded celebrating them. And on those birthdays mentioned in the Bible, bad things happened (see Gen. 40:20-22, Job 1:4, 13, 18-19, and Mat. 14:6-8). This is not a very strong endorsement to observe birthdays—or to keep Christmas, if Dec. 25 really were Jesus' birthday.

Not Jesus' Birthday

However, Christmas is NOT Jesus' birthday! He was not born on Dec. 25!

On the night Jesus was born there were shepherds in that area keeping watch over their flocks by night (Luke 2:8). "It was noted later that this date would fall within the rainy season in Palestine, so that the shepherds would hardly have been in the fields at night as they were when Jesus was born" ("Christmas," *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1956, vol. 3, p. 1425).

With a little in-depth Bible study and the help of Jewish historian Josephus (*Antiq.* 7.14.7), it's possible to determine that John the baptist's father, Zacharias, served in the temple during "the course of Abijah." This was the eighth week of the year (beginning in the spring)—Iyar 27 to Sivan 5, that is, June 1-8. Following his week of service, Zacharias was obligated to serve another week, for the next week was Pentecost, when ALL the priests were required to serve together. As soon as his ministry ended, Zacharias returned home and his wife conceived, about the middle of June. Nine months later,

CHRISTMAS

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Christmas

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John was born in the early spring. Jesus was born six months later, in the fall (Luke 1:5, 23-24, 26, 36; 1 Chron. 24:7-19, 27:1-2).

Whose Birthday Is It?

Since Dec. 25 is NOT Jesus Christ's birthday, *whose* birthday is it?

"The major festival of December is the winter solstice, also called Yule, Alban, Arthuan, and Midwinter. The birth of many solar saviors and dying gods is celebrated at this time, usually on 25 December. These saviors include Osiris, the Syrian Baal, Attis, Adonis, Helios, Apollo, Dionysus, Mithras, Jesus, Balder, and Frey. In Roman tradition 25 December was Dies Natalis Solis Invictus, the Day of the Birth of the Undefeated Sun. All of these deities are given similar titles: the Light of the World, Sun of Righteousness, and Savior. The festival of Christmas is a wonderful amalgamation of many religious traditions, ancient and modern, Pagan, Zoroastrian, Jewish, Mithraic, and Christian" (*The Pagan Book of Days* by Nigel Pennick, 1992, pp. 132-133).

These gods were false gods—including another Jesus—a false Jesus (2 Cor. 11:4).

Christmas Breaks God's Law

Those who celebrate Christmas are actually celebrating the birthday of FALSE sun gods! Is that *obeying Christ, doing the will of the Father or practicing lawlessness?*

God's law is based upon his 10 Commandments. The first commandment is: "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Ex. 20:2-3). Celebrating Christmas is therefore *breaking the law!* It's PRACTICING LAWLESSNESS! It is also having a form of godliness but denying the true power!

If we wish to enter into the kingdom of God, we must *do what Jesus said*. What did He say—keep Christmas or keep the commandments? Jesus tells us, "But if you want to enter into [eternal] life, keep the commandments" (Mat. 19:17).

The Old Testament tells how over and over, the ancient Israelites turned from obeying God to worshipping *gods born on Christmas*—BAALS. God calls this EVIL! "Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baals" (Judges 2:11).

It is very likely—since pagans celebrated birthdays—that part of serving these Baals was celebrating their birthday—on Dec. 25. What was God's reaction to Israel's keeping this early "Christmas"?

"And the anger of the LORD was hot

against Israel" (v. 14). Christmas-keeping doesn't please God—it makes Him angry!

Pagan Customs

The pagan origins of Christmas are confirmed by the origins of its customs:

- **Parties:** "The Saturnalia, the weeklong rite to the god Saturn dominates the rituals for December.... The Saturnalia was a festive time that lasted for seven days in Mid-December with private parties, special dinners, family celebrations, and the exchange of gifts. This festival, one of the most popular in ancient Rome, was celebrated into the third and fourth centuries C.E., with many of its customs being incorporated into the Christian holiday of Christmas" (*Classical Living: Reconnecting with the Rituals of Ancient Rome* by Frances Bernstein, Ph.D., 2000, pp. 215-216).

- **Feasting:** "The Saturnalia of ancient Rome was a time to feast, much as Christmas is in Italy today. The feasts, the games, the gift giving, the music, and the religious rituals are all very much a part of the December festival season in modern Rome, much as they were in antiquity. This has not changed in over two thousand years" (Bernstein, p. 228).

- **Gift Giving:** "Gift giving then [during Saturnalia] as now was a popular expression of friendship, love, and harmony. Along with the traditional gifts of candles and dolls, a variety of objects were purchased and exchanged between friends and family. In large families, presents were drawn blindfolded for gift exchange, much like today's 'Secret Santa'" (Bernstein, p. 227).

- **Christmas Tree:** "Several scholars believe the Christmas tree began in early Rome. It appears in German literature in 1604. Tree worship was common in Scandinavian countries.... When the pagans of northern Europe became Christians they made their sacred evergreen trees part of the Christmas festival and decorated the trees with gilded nuts, candles (a carry-over from pagan worship) and apples to stand for the stars, moon and the sun" ("Christmas," *The World Book Encyclopedia*, p. 1425).

- **Christmas Greens:** It is common to "deck the halls with boughs of holly" at this time of year. "The greens of course stem from the Druidic groves....

"In solemn procession, the white-gowned priests went to the sacred groves where they worshiped an invisible deity among the oak trees that symbolized his powers.... Wearing sprigs of holly in their hair, the priests then proceeded to cut the mistletoe found in the trees. The plant was a symbol of fertility and power to them....

"But the fact remains that the use of any

form of greens in the Christmas service is entirely pre-Christian and has nothing to do with the nativity" (*Star in the East* by Hans Holzer, 1973, pp. 25-26).

- **Lights and candles:** Lights and candles are part of the celebration of the winter solstice because the pagans thought the sun god needed encouragement as he waned in power at this darkest time of year (*Druids: Their Origins and History* by Lewis Spence, 1949, p. 99).

- **Carols:** "The Druids sang chants to create a harmonious atmosphere among the celebrants.... The chants also entered into the Christian tradition and became caroling, the singing of the songs of the season" (Holzer, p. 26).

- **Santa Claus:** "In northern Europe, St. Nicholas absorbed pagan attributes from Woden (Odin), chief of the wild hunt, who rides through the sky with reindeer and 42 supernatural huntsmen" (Pennick, p. 136).

Mixing Paganism with Truth

When Catholicism spread across Europe, the pagan celebrations could not be extirpated. So the church allowed the pagans to keep celebrating but gave new meaning to their days and customs. Instead of worshipping the sun-god, the church declared it to be a day of worshipping the Son of God. Even its name became Catholic—Christ-MASS.

Does God want his people mixing pagan celebrations with his worship? No! God warns the Israelites specifically not to do this in Deut. 12:29-32. And the Apostle Paul tells us we should not mix idol worship with true worship (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

So what's wrong with Christmas? It's worship of false gods, a violation of the first commandment, a sin (lawlessness) which Christ tells us will prevent us from gaining eternal life!

The SABBATH SCOOP

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Test Your Bible Knowledge

A small feature every month is our "Memory Scripture" on page 5. Do you remember these scriptures?

Each month, we feature a Memory Scripture on page 5 of *The Sabbath Scoop*. This month, we review some of these scriptures. Write the number for the correct answer on the line before each scripture. Match as many as you can before checking your answers with your Bible.

Chapters to Remember

- ____ Repentance
 ____ 10 Commandments

Creation vs. Evolution

____ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

____ The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

God

____ For the LORD does not see as a man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.

____ God is not a man, that He should lie.

____ For I am the LORD who heals you.

____ Surely the LORD God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

Man's Need for Repentance

____ For the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?

____ There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

____ For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as the sin of idolatry.

____ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.

____ Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.

____ For many are called, but few are chosen.

Our Duty

____ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.

____ Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My

1. Gen. 1:1	15. Ps. 14:1	29. Eccles. 9:10
2. Gen. 2:2-3	16. Ps. 34:19	30. Eccles. 12:13
3. Ex. 15:26	17. Ps. 51	31. Jer. 17:9
4. Ex. 20 Deut. 5	18. Ps. 133:1	32. Ezek. 18:4
5. Ex. 20:7	19. Prov. 1:7	33. Amos 3:7
6. Ex. 20:12	20. Prov. 3:9	34. Mal. 3:8
7. Ex. 20:13	21. Prov. 3:12	35. Mat. 5:14
8. Ex. 31:13	22. Prov. 5:15	36. Mat. 5:17
9. Lev. 19:28	23. Prov. 13:24	37. Mat. 6:21
10. Num. 23:19	24. Prov. 14:12	38. Mat. 6:33
11. Deut. 6:5	25. Prov. 18:24	39. Mat. 7:13
12. Deut. 10:14	26. Prov. 22:6	40. Mat. 7:21
13. 1 Sam. 15:23	27. Prov. 22:15	41. Mat. 19:17
14. 1 Sam. 16:7	28. Prov. 31:10	42. Mat. 22:14

Father in Heaven.

____ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

____ A man who has friends must himself be friendly. But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

____ Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

____ You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

The Commandments

____ You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

____ You shall not murder.

____ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

____ Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

____ But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.

Sabbath

____ And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

____ Speak to the children of Israel saying: "Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you."

Finances and Tithing

____ Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, also the earth and all that is in it.

____ Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of your increase.

____ Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, "In what way have we robbed You?" In tithes and offerings.

____ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Tattoos

____ You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the LORD.

Trials

____ Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers Him out of them all.

____ For whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.

Love, Marriage & Family

____ Drink water from your own cistern, and running water from your own well.

____ Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far more than rubies.

____ Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

____ He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

____ Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

____ Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive him far from it.

Death & Afterlife

____ The soul who sins shall die.

____ Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might: for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

College Letters:

Lessons of Life Learned at Ambassador College

If you can't see the gun sights, it's hard to hit the deer. There may be more dimensions than we realize.

[Editor's note: The following letters were filed out of order. We digress slightly as we publish them here.]

Nov. 3rd [1975]

Hi Greg,

You're the lucky one this week, if you call getting a letter from your old dad lucky!

Things are humming along real good here, in fact, too good... I came out of semi-retirement and went back to work. The job is with National Bushing Co., an auto parts company and is somewhat similar to the job I had at Van Dusen. I receive stock, put it away, fill orders and do quite a bit of delivery. Drive a Chev van about 10 years old. The wages aren't much but it pays my expenses. It sure cuts into my sleeping time and all my other spare time. One thing on the plus side is that the people that work there are real good to work with. I had to put up with some real doozies at Van Dusen.

I haven't had any luck hunting but I did get some shots at a deer one evening. It was almost dark and I couldn't see the sights on the gun. And when I fired, I could see the red flash at the end of the gun barrel. The deer was only about 300 ft. away but I missed it. Some neighbors shot one a couple blocks east of my house Sat. There were 12 in the hunting party but he said he could give me a chunk. There really aren't many deer around here this year.

My [book] publisher sent another blurb for the soft cover (for approval). This time it was real good except for one paragraph. So I rewrote that portion and fired it back. I doubt now if it will be published before January.

Hank and Eve [Dad's sister] came down last weekend and were over Saturday. Lucile [Dad's sister] & Carl came along. No news of any earth-shaking aspects. My uncle Oscar (Dad's brother) died and [the] funeral was last week in Calif. My mother's sister, Lou, died a few weeks ago and Lucile & I went to Sauk Rapids for the funeral. She was 101-1/2.

I put a new fuel pump on the Chev and have to put a tail pipe on before it gets cold. I should have Linda here for jobs

like that. [My sister had taken an auto repair class.] I'm going to take the ball joints off that wrecked car (that I got for Brad's parts) and put them on my Chev. They don't seem worn. I swapped the windshield washer/motor set up. My old one was just one speed and didn't have the washer doo-dads. Did you use Brad's car to go to Wisc.?

I helped Dick with foundation pads for his proposed 36x60 metal building. I guess he is going to put up the rafter/up-right sections tomorrow. They weigh at least 1-1/2 tons each. He hired a guy with a crane to hoist them into place.

Well that takes care of all the important events of the season. The weather has been great. I still have rutabagas in the garden. I picked strawberries about a week ago but I guess there aren't any more now. Still eating watermelons and honeydews. Ate the last muskmelon tonight.

Enclosed find clipping of interest.

Dad

[The newspaper clipping said: "When I make a speech, I like the head-table chairman to start me off as 'a man who needs all the introduction he can get.'"]

Thurs. 13th.

Dear Greg,

Hello! How've you been? Pretty good here. School has kept me busy. The play goes on Friday the 21st. And rehearsals have been both after school and evenings. We still have a lot of rough edges to smooth over. I haven't been getting quite enough sleep lately trying to keep up with school work, play and Junior Achievement in Minneapolis. And my grades this last quarter reflect it.

History C+
Biology C
Phy-Ed C
Orchestra A+
Speech C
Math II C+

Those are average but not my capabilities. I should have done a lot better. I plan to and I'll be happy when the play is over.

So how's college treating you? I suppose you don't find it too difficult to find things to keep you busy.

Do you still have your radio program? How is it coming along? (Sorry this is so sloppy but I'm in orchestra and my lap makes a poor substitute for a desk.)

When is your next trip home? I suppose Christmas vacations don't hold much significance at Ambassador. We get 2 weeks off beginning Dec. 19. I'm looking forward to it. Mainly because I'll be able to catch up on a little sleep.

Well, it's best that I close for now. Unfortunately, I don't have your letter with me or I could write a little better. Keep well.

W.B. [Write back]

Love,

Susan [Kangas]

Postmarked Nov. 16, 1975

Dear Greg,

Long time no see. I thought it best to write you though I would rather drive out. Yes, Virginia—I got my license.

I also just got my grades. Below is an example:

Man's Heritage C+
Basic Drafting B-
II English B
Physics B-
High Algebra A-

That is an example but it is not mine. My grades are on the following page.

I seem to be doing better this quarter than last quarter.

I have been working more lately too. This is unfortunate in the fact that I am to miss "Dark Shadows" (which is on at 3:30), but it is fortunate in that I need the money. It is hard to pay for a car and entertainment and yet stay within \$20 for two weeks. My next paycheck should be close to \$82. It is strange to come home and have to go right to work, but I love driving my car.

Physics A+
History B+
English A-
Drafting A-
Algebra A

The second day after I got my license I went to a movie with Mark and Phil. We saw *Monty Python & the Holy Grail*. It was one of the funniest movies that I've seen on a long time.

One of the cheapy records of mine—the

one that's all instrumental—came on and it reminded me of the L.P.'s I saw at Musisland. They were 44¢ and 1¢ for the 2nd one. It would have been a good deal if there would have been just one good song.

You asked for proof of the dimensions, well here it is:

Everyone knows that the first dimension is a line $_$. The second is a square of the line, or area \square . The third is the square of an area or a cube \square^2 . Now if time is a fourth dimension like it is believed to be, then time would have to be the square of a cube. This is because each dimension is the square of the previous one. Everyone knows that time only goes in a straight line through the ages. This proves that a cube squared is a line. We have already proven a line squared is an area or a square (see 1st and 2nd dimensions). Therefore an area of time comes after time. This is sometimes referred to as a tesseract. We also know that the square of a square is a cube (see 2nd and 3rd dimensions). Now we have what is known to be a cube of time, or time cubed. This is the 6th Dimension. The 7th Dimension would therefore have to be a line of time chunks because we have already stated that a cube squared is a line (see 3rd and 4th Dim.). This then continues in an unending sequence.

Someone might ask, "How do you know these dimensions exist?"

To this you can either reply with a kick and a belt in the mouth, or you can use my explanation. Here it is: Numbers are known to be infinite, right? How about drops of water in the ocean? Is it not possible to keep cutting drops in half until you're into molecular structures? And even then it is possible to split atoms. Does space have an end to it? When does time end or begin? How far is it from here to there? All of these substances are infinite amounts. How then can you say there only 4 dimensions to measure by? The dimensions must also go on into infinity. They are there even though man doesn't comprehend how or what they are. I, in my infinite wisdom have trouble understanding dimensions beyond the 8th. It is possible that even my figures and definitions are out of order but nevertheless, they must be there.

I rest my case.

Tammy [the dog] says hi.

I will see or write you later but I've got to go now. Till we meet again.

Brad

Nov. 23, 1975

Dear Greg,

I just got home from work a little bit ago. Brad too but he already took off for Mark's house. They may go bowling. I'm watching a Tarzan movie.

Thursday we had snow and ice so it has been hard driving. Brad drove to school that day. Then he had to work 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Lance made him call home to let me know he got there O.K. He doesn't seem to have any trouble driving on the ice.

We had Brent & Peggy and baby over for supper Friday night. We played the tape Linda sent of the Bible study with G.T.A. answering questions about the little picky things. Then Sabbath we heard the same thing at services. Of course, I can always hear the same thing several times. [These "little picky things" were changes in church policy and doctrines to allow birthday celebrations, immunizations, voting, jury duty, working in hospitals and defense factories, giving out candy on Halloween and participating in pleasurable activities such as card games, swimming, golf, etc. on the Sabbath. This was the beginning of what was later termed as "the liberal years" in the church. While some brethren got "bent out of shape" by the changes and left the church, Mom kept things in perspective.]

Saturday night the teens had a roller skating party so Brad went to that. It was at Valley View Roller Rink, which is just a little north of 494 and a block off County Rd. 18 so it was close to home. Mr. & Mrs. Bardahl came over with Brenda and spent the evening with me.

I got Thanksgiving off from work. He gave me Sunday off too. I'm glad but I know I'll miss the money because I usually make \$30 on Sunday. I don't know if I'll always have Sunday off or if just once in a while.

Carl & Lucile were down last week. Lucile had to go to the clinic for a check up. She called here so I invited them to spend the night which they did. They had to get their own breakfast and lock up the house when they left but they didn't mind. I guess Brainerd got quite a bit of snow too. I know St. Cloud did because quite a few hunters were stranded there so I suppose your Dad is snowed in. Lucile invited us up there for Thanksgiving but we already had accepted an invitation to Pruzinskis. Really wouldn't want to drive up there when you can't count on the weather.

I had a pain in my side for three days. Sure thought I may be getting appendicitis but it was gone today so I guess it was nothing.

Guess that's about all the news from here.

Love,
Mom

COLLEGE LETTERS

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Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPSA. In China and Japan the pine tree was considered the symbol of life, longevity and immortality.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.

Wild Men, Wild Alaska by Rocky McElveen, 2006, Thomas Nelson, pp. 28-29

'Love' Distracts

"I was preparing for a late-fall, "hard horn" caribou hunt with two of my good friends. The later the season, the more likely a caribou or moose is to have rubbed the now-itching velvet off his horns....

"Horns losing their velvet are referred to as 'hard horns.'

"A late-fall hunt is an easier hunt because bulls are in rut and, in a word, distracted! Love is like that, fellas! Rutting bulls are much easier to stalk."

Prov. 2:16-18, 6:27-29, 7:21-23, 30:18-19

Quotable Quote

"There is no medicine like hope, no incentive so great, and no tonic so powerful as expectation of something better tomorrow."

—Orison Marden

Memory Scripture

"Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: At the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed."

—Deut. 16:16

College Letters

Continued from Page 5

December 7, 1975

Dear Greg,

Got home from work a little while ago so have the dishwasher going so we have clean dishes for supper.

We went to Pruzinskis for Thanksgiving. Went off my diet some because there were so many goodies to eat. The kids went bowling in the evening. Jimmy Kuether [a cousin] went with the kids. When we took him home we stopped to see Melvin [Mom's brother] and Edna for a little while. It was a big day.

Saturday, a week ago, we were invited to Bauers after services. Schulers were there and Mrs. Tharpe and Mark Pruzinski. Some of us played the game Tripoli. It was so much fun I went out and bought a game. The kids all went to the show. When they got back it was snowing so hard. It was slippery driving and the snow froze on the windshield. I was really glad to be home.

The past few days the temp has been in the 30's so the snow has melted fast. It has been nice for this time of year. It saves on the fuel bill and does it ever need saving. They just filled our [heating oil] tank the other day so I have a bill sitting here for \$75.00.

Brad went with Phil bowling last night so I took the opportunity to wash clothes and iron. Got pretty well caught up on that.

The [church teen] basketball tournament is coming up in Chicago over Xmas. Brad & Phil are planning on going. I don't like it too well because I just feel teens are too young to be chasing that far. Brad thought he was going to drive but I said "absolutely not."

With all my going & eating the wrong things I gained a couple of pounds. Of course, that was a two week period because I missed a meeting because of blizzard conditions. Am back on the diet real strict again and according to my scale I've already lost the two pounds. Hope I can lose 20 pounds this month.

Had bridge here last Monday night. Didn't have to work last Sunday So I cleaned like mad getting ready for bridge. I had such lousy cards I won booby prize. We don't use gifts except for traveling prize. We all put in a quarter so I got my quarter back. I like prizes better.

Well guess that's about all we've been doing.

Much love,
Mom



NATO to Build Missile Defense System

"NATO leaders agreed on Friday evening [Nov. 19] to establish a missile defense shield that would cover all NATO member states....

"President Obama, who has promoted a less costly, more flexible missile defense system that will have components in Europe and at sea, praised the day's work, saying that for the first time 'we've developed a missile defense capability that is strong enough to cover all NATO European territory and populations as well as the United States.'...

"Mr. Obama told American reporters, '...New Start [the missile defense system] will strengthen our alliance, and it will strengthen European security.'...

"The document also commits the alliance, for the first time, 'to the goal of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons,' while reconfirming the centrality of nuclear deterrence 'as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world'" ("NATO Agrees to Build Missile Defense System" by Steven Erlanger and Jackie Calmes, *The New York Times* reprints, Nov. 19, 2010, pp. 1-3).

As leaders in NATO, the U.S. and Britain will be responsible for establishing a missile defense system for Europe. That system and military training may be used against the U.S. and Britain in the future!

God prophesied that modern-day Assyria (Germany) will attack modern-day Israel (U.S. and British Commonwealth countries) to punish our nations for their disobedience to Him (Isa. 10:5-7). Prior to that time, our nations will make covenants with Germany (Hos. 12:1-2). Germany is part of NATO.

God also tells us that we will train our enemies who will later attack us:

"What will you say when He punishes you? For you have taught them to be chieftains, to be head over you. Will not pangs seize you, like a woman in labor? And if you say in your heart, 'Why have these things come upon me?' For the greatness of your iniquity your skirts have been uncovered, your heels made bare" (Jer. 13:21-22).

President Obama seeks to create a nu-

clear-free world. He may lead the effort by pushing the U.S. to disarm itself of nuclear weapons, making it an easier target for an attack from a German-led European Union that still has nuclear weapons.

God promised that if our people would reject Him, He would break the pride of our power (Lev. 26:19). We are seeing a loss of pride in our military strength! If our nations don't repent, national captivity awaits us (vv. 27-35, 43-45)!

EU May Split Apart

Economic pressure may force the 25-member European Union to split apart. If this happens, we may see arising out of the rubble the 10-king union that will rule just before Christ returns (Dan. 2:35, 41-44; Rev. 17:12-14).

"Even as British officials and other Europeans bear down on a resolution to Ireland's debt crisis, there is a lingering unease in the markets about whether one or more countries might eventually bolt the currency union.

"Few economists predict the Euro zone will splinter, but many more see some breakup risk—one that has contributed to volatility on bond markets in recent days and helped push the currency down.

" 'A significant proportion of investors think this is a possible if not probable scenario,' said Elga Bartsch, an economist at Morgan Stanley in London who does not subscribe to the gloomiest views. 'It seems that the market is giving it a higher probability than before' " ("For Euro Nations, There Are Strings Attached" by Jack Ewing and James Kanter, *The New York Times* reprints, Nov. 17, 2010, p. 1).

If the European Union is the beginning of the 10-king union of the end time, then something must happen to get the number of nations reduced from 25 to 10.

A weak economy in Germany led to the rise of Adolph Hitler after World War I. A weak economy could lead to the rise of another German dictator who will unite Europe before Christ returns—this one called the Beast (Rev. 13:1-10, 17:7-14, 19:11-21).